comprehensively assesses issues concerning Sustainability of plastics as materials and their impact on the environment. Plastics are generally chemically inert. However, the indiscriminate littering of plastics and environmentally unsound recycling practices have the potential to cause adverse impacts on environment and health.

The Government of India has notified the Plastics Manufacture Sale and Usage Rules, 1999 amended 2003 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. As per these rules, manufacture, stocking distribution, or selling of carry bags made of virgin or recycled plastic which are less than 20 x 30 cms in size and 20 microns thickness is banned. These rules also prohibit use of recycled plastic bags and containers for storing, carrying, dispensing or packaging of foodstuffs. Further, units manufacturing carry bags or containers made of virgin and recycled plastics are required to register with the concerned State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) or Pollution Control Committee (PCC) prior to the commencement of production.

As per information made available by State Pollution Control Boards, the States like Maharashtra, Punjab, Chandigarh, Kerala, Meghalaya and Goa have laid down stricter norms than prescribed with regard to thickness of plastic bags *viz.* 50, 30, 30, 30, 40 and 40 microns respectively. The State of Himachal Pradesh has banned carrry bags made of non biodegradable material of thickness less than 70 microns and size less than 18 x 12 inches. The Government of West Bengal has banned the manufacture, use, storage and sale of plastic carry bags of thickness below 40 microns and of size 16 x 12". Further the States of Gujarat, Orissa and Goa has banned use of plastic bags in certain religious and tourist places like Ambaji, Dakor, Somnath in Gujarat and municipal area of Puri and Konark in Orissa. The concerned State Governments and the Union Territory Administrations are monitoring the implementation.

Land for Sabrimala Pilgrims

234. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the forest land demanded by the Dedvasthan Board for use of Sabrimala pilgrims;

(b) details of land released so far;

(c) reasons for not sanctioning the total land demanded for, by the State;

(d) whether any study has been conducted on the minimum need of land for the use of pilgrims in Sabrimala;

(e) if so, details thereof; and

(f) the steps Government proposes to take to provide adequate amenities for pilgrims?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) The Travancore Devaswom Board had demanded an area of 500 ha. of forest land (falling in the Periyar Tiger Reserve and Ranni Forest Division) for Sabrimala pilgirm facilitation.

(b) The details of forest land given to Travancore Devanswom Board for Sabrimala pilgrim facilitation are at given in the enclosed Statement. (*See* below).

(c) to (e) Based on discussions with the Travancore Devaswom Board representatives

and State Government officials, an area of 12.675 ha. in the Periyar Tiger Reserve and 110.524 ha. of forest and at Nilakal was diverted for providing to Travancore Devaswom Board in 2005. This was based on a Concept Plan forming the basis of a professionally drawn Master Plan commissioned by the State Government with Central Assistance, which had arrived at the said land requirement based on a detailed ground study and interaction with stakeholder agencies.

(f) The Master Plan has immediate, short-term and long-term measures to benefit Sabarimala pilgrims. Further, the State has constituted a working level Committee, apart from an Apex level Steering Committee, for taking needful action *vis-a-vis* the Master Plan implementation.

Statement

Details of foreign land given to Travancore Devaswom Board for Sabarimala Pilgrim facilitation

Sl. No.	Location	Area (ha.)
	Within Periyar Tiger Reserve	
1.	Sannidhanam	5.260
2.	Sannidhanam	20.240
3.	Pamba	4.448
4.	Malikapuram	1.900
5.	Pamba	3.440
6.	Saramkutty	5.590
7.	Vedipura	2.620
8.	Cheriyanavattom	0.4225
9.	Kunnar	0.200
10.	Peeriyar Tiger Reserve	12.675
	TOTAL:	.56.3955
	Outside Periyar Tiger Reserve	
11.	Nilakal	110.524
12.	Thivani	4.048
13.	Chalakkayam-Pamba	1.922
14.	Pamba	1.4425
15.	Pamba	5.000
16.	Pamba	1.700
	TOTAL:	124.6365
	GRAND TOTAL:	181.032